

First-Minute Injury Spoils Wycombe Chances Against Dashing Dons

By "NOVA"

Wycombe Wanderers 0, Wimbledon 1

WYCOMBE Wanderers' hopes of avenging their Amateur Cup defeat against Wimbledon were smashed in the first minute of their Isthmian League game at Loakes Park on Saturday, when left-winger Steve Hyde was carried off the field with a dislocated knee and strained ligaments.

For the remainder of the game Wycombe struggled on with ten men against the toughest opposition in the league—and creditably held the Dons to a single goal.

While the Wimbledon forwards were badly off the mark, every credit must be given to the courage of the Wycombe defence. And at one period just before half-time the Wanderers were forcing the pace and had the Dons defending desperately.

Wimbledon, rough and tough as usual, again infuriated the home crowd at times by their uncompromising tactics.

Outstanding in the home defence, especially when the pressure was at its heaviest, were Charlie Gale and John Beck. Gale kept Les Brown subdued with a great display of hard tackling and deft interceptions, while Beck, who beats an opponent with much more ease than most forwards, interchanged perfectly with Dave Thomas in upfield sallies.

John Fisher had to be on the alert all the time against big Eddie Reynolds, a mobile centre forward always on the lookout for an opening, and honours were just about even.

Dave Thomas had an excellent first half but faded in the second, when Micky Moore, the Dons inside-left, was at his best. Alistair Lewis, cool, calm and competent as ever, gave a graceful display and coped well with flyer Brian Keats.

It would be hard to judge new boy George Pullin on just one performance—and one without a partner. But in the first half he put some excellent passes through to Tony Horseman, who revelled in the inside-forward position.

Peter James and Len Worley were both largely shut out by some first-time tackling though there were times when they gave the Wimbledon defence some anxious moments.

THE WINNER

The goal that gave Wimbledon the points was scored five minutes after half-time, when Brian Keats recovered a loose ball following a corner and lobbed it on to the unmarked Reynolds, who neatly headed it into the corner of the net.

Seconds later a Worley cross was almost misjudged by McAlpine, who just managed to punch it away for a corner. But this was only a defiant gesture for Wimbledon swept back into the attack and stayed there until the final whistle. Only Smart saves by Ken Brown and two goal-line clearances by Beck kept the score down.